

**R.I. BAYS, RIVERS AND WATERSHEDS COORDINATION TEAM**  
**MEETING SUMMARY: APRIL 20, 2005**  
**NARRAGANSETT BAY COMMISSION BOARD ROOM**  
**ONE SERVICE RD., PROVIDENCE RI**

Chaired by Richard C. Ribb, *Chair-Designate*

**I. April 20, 2005 Coordination Team meeting summary**

The Coordination Team approved the April 20 meeting summary.

**II. Coordination Team Rules of Business**

The Coordination Team approved the revised Coordination Team Rules of Business.

**III. Distribution of the Synthesized Goals & Objectives for Systems Level Plan**

Coordination Team will provide reviews and comments on the draft Goals and Objectives document by June 7, 2005 with a goal of approval the revised document at the June 22 meeting.

Coordination Team comments: There are conflicts in the dates listed on page 2 of the document; sources of goals missing – Governor’s Executive Order creating the Bay & Watershed Planning Commission, the Partnership for Narragansett Bay Watershed Vision/Goals document, the Narragansett Bay Summit 2000 Report, and the statute creating the Coordination Team.

**IV. Discussion of Environmental Monitoring Prioritization Report & SAC Perspectives**

Dr. Peter August, Chair of the Environmental Monitoring Collaborative (EMC) discussed results from the prioritization work that the EMC had done on the Monitoring Strategy.

Recommendations from EMC:

- The proposed RIDEM monitoring program in the Governor’s budget proposal is widely supported and a good investment;
- There was support for a Monitoring Grants Program with at \$125,000 funding level;
- There was support for a Bioinvasives Monitoring and Response Program as proposed by Natural History Survey, requiring \$94,000 to implement;
- Support was expressed for a Data Management Planning effort requiring \$50,000 to implement;
- Support was expressed for an Inventory of Critical Monitoring Data at a cost of \$11,000;
- Support was expressed for a system that makes a wide range of monitoring data available and accessible on the Internet at a cost of \$53,000.

Coordination Team members provided recommendations to the EMC regarding monitoring needs:

- 1) Expand and support volunteer monitoring taking advantage of the network of citizen volunteers;
- 2) Identify, map and develop protection mechanisms for headwater streams;
- 3) The EMC should be a resource for monitoring mentors to volunteer efforts and as a source of technical assistance.

Coordination Team members also noted that there is a need for updating land use change and cover on a five-year cycle as it pertains to water, forestry, biodiversity, habitat protection, and all forms of planning; an effort to re-map freshwater wetlands was also recommended; Dr. August suggested that the Coordination Team needs to communicate these messages.

It was also noted that, given the tasks assigned to the Monitoring Collaboratives and Advisory Committees, some administrative and technical support would be needed in order to accomplish the committee charges. R. Ribb will work with Chairs to assess these needs and determine appropriate action.

Scientific Advisory Chair Donald Pryor distributed a report dated May 16, 2005, from the SAC that included findings regarding the EMC monitoring strategy. Summarized, the SAC comments agreed with the recommendations of the EMC on monitoring priorities; noted the monitoring strategy was a work in progress - there is still work to be done and the Coordination Team needs to insure that all agencies are fully participating; noted that monitoring actions should target management needs and support evaluation of management programs; and requested that some form of technical/administrative assistance be provided to the SAC. The Coordination Team should connect these needs and address them in a coordinated fashion.

The Coordination Team asked what the Governor's budget request for RIDEM monitoring program would fund. Susan Kiernan, of RIDEM Water Resources, provided the following information:

The \$983,000 budget request will fund five elements in the RIDEM proposal including:

- 1) Support fixed sampling stations in Bay;
- 2) Restore monitoring of major tributaries to the Bay, e.g., Blackstone, Pawtuxet;
- 3) A rotating water quality assessment of freshwater rivers and streams;
- 4) A rotating water quality assessment of coves and embayments not covered by fixed stations;
- 5) Support for synoptic dissolved oxygen surveys to characterize hypoxia in Bay.

Elements that are in the strategy, but not included in the FY2006 state budget proposal:

- 1) Fish tissue sampling;
- 2) Expanding stream gauge network – adding five key stations

- 3) Assessment of unassessed lakes
- 4) Beach testing –DOH concerned around lakes and its coastal beach monitoring program may need funding for 2006.

There was a discussion of the need for fish tissue sampling (both fresh and saltwater); RIDEM's Susan Kiernan indicated that it was probable that the short term need for this sampling would be addressed through the use federal funds.

After discussion of the EMC and SAC findings, the Coordination Team instructed the Chair-designate to draft a letter from the Team expressing support for the following three priority monitoring actions:

- (1) The Team strongly supports the Governor's proposed \$983,000 DEM-based monitoring program and recommends to the Governor and the General Assembly that this program be fully funded; the Team identified this as the priority action for funding consideration and stated that only if this is first fully funded should the following actions be funded;
- (2) The Team recommends that \$140,000 be provided to install and maintain five new river flow gauges;
- (3) The Team recommends funding totaling \$94,000 for the bioinvasives monitoring and response strategy that would draw on the services of the R. I. Natural History Survey, RIDEM and RI CRMC. This would be contingent on a revision of the proposal so that it addresses marine as well as freshwater and upland species.

Once the Team comments are incorporated and a final draft is reviewed and approved, the Chair-designate will convey the letter to the Governor, the Speaker of the House and the President of the Senate.

## **V. Systems Dynamics Exercise Project Identification**

A follow up meeting is being planned for to further explore and flesh out collaborative projects that will assist in the development of the Systems Level Plan [post-meeting action: the follow up session is planned for June 29, 2005, at 9:00 a.m. at the Economic Policy Council offices, Davol Square, Providence RI.]

## **VI. Other Business**

The Chair-designate introduced members of an EPA implementation review team that was here on a site evaluation of the Narragansett Bay Estuary Program (NBEP). The NBEP undergoes this significant EPA review every three years. The EPA team is looking at how the NBEP and the Coordination Team can work together on common goals and priorities.

It was noted that the Annual Big River Clean-up was very successful. Participants collected over ten tons more than last year's cleanup.

## **VI. Revised Meeting Schedule**

There was a discussion regarding meeting times and the Coordination Team decided to change the monthly meeting date from the third Wednesday of each month to the fourth Wednesday of each month. The revised meeting schedule is listed below.

### **Meeting Adjourned**

The meeting adjourned at 11:47 a.m.

**Next Coordination Team Meeting:** Wednesday, June 22, 2005, 10 a.m. – 11:30 a.m. in the Narragansett Bay Commission Board Room. The meeting agenda and review materials will be developed and distributed prior to the meeting. Comments and questions can be sent to [rribb@gso.uri.edu](mailto:rribb@gso.uri.edu) or by calling (401) 874-6233.

### **Coordination Team Meeting Schedule: June – December 2005**

All meetings take place at 10 a.m. at the Narragansett Bay Commission Board Room unless otherwise notified.

June 22

July 27

August 24

September 28 (location TBA)

October 26

November 23

December 28

**May 18, 2005      Meeting Attendees**

**Coordination Team**

Robert Ballou	R.I. Dept. of Environmental Management
Michael Walker	Economic Development Corporation
Daniel Varin	R.I. Water Resources Board
John O'Brien	R.I. Dept. of Administration – Statewide Planning Program
Meg Kerr	R.I. Rivers Council
Paul Pinault	Narragansett Bay Commission
Jeff Willis	RI Coastal Resources Management Council
Richard Ribb	Chair Designate, Coordination Team

**Other Attendees**

Mark Adelman	R. I. Governor's Office
Ariana Johnson	R.I. Economic Policy Council
Janet Keller	R.I. Dept. of Environmental Management
Susan Kiernan	R.I. Dept. of Environmental Management
Bruce Vild	R.I. Dept. of Administration – Statewide Planning Program
Donald Pryor	Brown University
Chip Young	URI Coastal Resources Center
Peter August	URI Coastal Institute
Margherita Pryor	U.S. EPA Region 1
Tom Ardito	Narragansett Bay Estuary Program
Helen Cottrell	Narragansett Bay Estuary Program
Christopher Deacutis	Narragansett Bay Estuary Program
Tom Uva	Narragansett Bay Commission
MaryJo Feuerbach	U.S. EPA Region 1
Jennifer Linn	U.S. EPA Coastal Management Branch
Jamal Kadri	U.S. EPA Coastal Management Branch